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NZ's Women in Governance Award Winners Revealed!

Women on Boards NZ and Governance NZ are thrilled to reveal the winners for this year's Women in Governance Awards!

The winners were announced at a special Awards Gala Dinner held at the Hilton Auckland this evening. The Awards were presented by Minister for Women, Hon Julie Anne Genter, who also took the opportunity to reveal that 2018 has seen a record level of women on state sector boards.

[Read full announcement...](#)

Canterbury law firm **Saunders Robinson Brown** took out the prestigious **Gender Diverse Organisation of the Year Award**. The judges noted that the winner *"demonstrated strong female representation in governance and senior leadership. They have shown commitment over a number of years to embed diversity strategies that have ensured female employees receive the mentoring and training they need to enable them to attain their career goals. Their commitment to gender equality is unquestionable."*

A first for the Women in Governance Awards, this year the judges also awarded a **Highly Commended Award** in this category to an organisation that is just starting their diversity journey. This Award went to **Johnstone Construction Ltd** who the judging panel applauded for *"having made some very good progress towards gender representation in a male dominated sector. The organisation recognises women at all levels of the business and is building an impressive leadership pipeline."*

Sue Kedgley received the **Not-for-Profit Governance Leader Award** and was commended for being *"a woman who has used her influence to build an impressive career in governance."*

The inaugural **Maori or Pasifika Governance Leader Award** went to Tuahiwi School Principal **Melanie Taite** of Kaiapoi. Melanie's application clearly impressed the judging panel who described her as *"a woman who has passion, aroha and wairoa and who is on a clear pathway of advancement in her governance career. Returning to her place of birth, her commitment to bringing about change for future generations is undeniable."*

The **Emerging Leader Award category** is always hotly contested, and this year was no exception with a record number of entries received, illustrating the continued rise of younger women successfully pursuing a career in governance. This year's Award winner is **Chelsea Grootveld** from Kapiti who the judges described as *"a woman who clearly demonstrates conscious and impactful leadership particularly in the area of diversity. The combination of depth of knowledge and experience in public policy and strategic direction coupled with her education and research credentials has seen the winner of this award deliver tangible value."*

The **Inspiring Governance Leader Award** is the Supreme Award and is presented to a woman who is truly an inspiration and role model for all women. This year's Award went to highly skilled and experienced professional director, **Justine Smyth**. Justine is currently the Chair of Spark New Zealand, a Director of Auckland International Airport and the Chair of the Breast Cancer Foundation of New Zealand. The judging panel commented *"Justine is raising awareness of the importance of gender equity around the board table. Her testimonials clearly demonstrate that she is a keen mentor and a role model for other women, and she truly is an inspiration to us all."*

AWARD WINNERS & FINALISTS 2019

GENDER DIVERSE ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR - *sponsored by Diligent*

Auckland War Memorial Museum - *finalist*

Johnstone Construction Ltd – *highly commended*

Public Service Association - *finalist*

Recreation Aotearoa - *finalist*

Ruralco - *finalist*

Saunders Robinson Brown Law - *winner*

NOT-FOR-PROFIT GOVERNANCE LEADER

Charlotte Isaac - *finalist*

Jeralyn Rittenhouse - *finalist*

Sally Morrison - *finalist*

Sue Kedgley - *winner*

Tamara Croft - *finalist*

MĀORI OR PASIFIKA GOVERNANCE LEADER

Chelsea Grootveld - *finalist*

Kerry-Leigh Dougall - *finalist*

Melanie Taite – *winner*

Orchid Atimalala - *finalist*

Vanessa Eparaima - *finalist*

EMERGING GOVERNANCE LEADER - *sponsored by Sport New Zealand*

Chelsea Grootveld - *winner*

Lizzie Marvally - *finalist*

Monina Hernandez - *finalist*

Sally McKechnie - *finalist*

Wendy Wei-ju Chen - *finalist*

INSPIRING GOVERNANCE LEADER (Supreme Award)

Annah Stretton - *finalist*

Colleen Upton - *finalist*

Justine Smyth - *winner*

Sally Morrison - *finalist*

Vanessa Eparaima - *finalist*

The [Women in Governance Awards](#) are an initiative of [Women on Boards NZ](#) which is a business unit of [Governance New Zealand](#). The Awards programme recognises and celebrates innovation, excellence, creativity and commitment to diversity by **both organisations and individuals**.

[Women on Boards New Zealand](#) was established to promote and advocate for greater gender diversity at the executive and board level in New Zealand in the belief that the boards of companies across all sectors benefit from the diversity that a gender-balanced board brings.

[Governance New Zealand](#) is New Zealand's leading independent professional body with a sole focus on the practice of governance and is dedicated to providing leadership in the areas of governance, compliance and risk management.

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